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SUBJECT Agrarian Communities of Ayaguz and Chu, Kazakh SSR

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Ayaguz (Sergiopol) (47°56'N - 80°23'E) in 1940 and 1941 was a simple village consisting of stone and lime buildings and a railroad station. The economy was solely agrarian. A central sovkhos was located about 20 miles southeast of the village, with four smaller sovkhoses in an area about 12 miles east of the central one. Transportation from Ayaguz to sovkhoses was by foot or oxcart. There was no railroad or vehicle road. The central sovkhos was the administrative seat for the four smaller sovkhoses. It had a grade school, a tractor and combine pool, and handled mail. Gasoline for tractors was hauled by oxcart from Ayaguz rail station. Crops raised consisted of wheat and oats. Due to apathy and negligence on the part of sovkhos members, including native Kazakhs, crops were not harvested properly or on time, became dark and mildewed, and were all but unfit for human consumption. Stock consisted of sheep and cattle. The smaller sovkhoses had flocks of about one thousand sheep each. Sheep were sheared semi-annually, and some were slaughtered to provide meat for the Soviet Army. Cattle were used for milking and slaughtering, with cheese and meat products also going to the Soviet Army. All meat was salted.
2. Brucellosis accounted for the death of about 20% of sheep flocks annually. Veterinary care was primitive and consisted of isolating sick from healthy animals. No inoculations were available. Native Kazakhs were in the habit of eating flesh of sheep dead from brucellosis, and suffered no noticeable ill effects.
3. Kazakhs residing in this area were not in sympathy with the Soviet Government, and particularly opposed the collective farm system. The primitive nature of the country precluded earning a better livelihood and most were resigned to their lot. Some, however, mentioned the opportunity for escape to Sinkiang, a course taken by a few from time to time. Their knowledge of medical care was cursory, and many believed in the curative power of gold when touched to a diseased portion of the body. They were fatalistic concerning life and death, and did not value human life highly. Fortunately, the climate in Ayaguz was healthy, with a dry cold in the winter, resulting in little sickness.

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4. An informer system existed in sovkhoses of Ayaguz, though guards were non-existent. Informers were the typical tale-bearing type, usually natives, who curried favor with sovkhos officials. Sovkhos officials controlled the mail system, and demanded a portion of contents of gift packages as a pourboire..
5. Agrarian community of Chu (43°36'E - 73°42'E) was composed of kolkhozes. Sugar beets were the staple crop of all kolkhozes. Irrigation was possible through water impounded by several small dams on local streams. One kolkhoz was manned by Ukrainians. They had numerous vegetable gardens and raised excellent watermelons and potatoes. The largest kolkhoz was called Lenin, and was located about four miles east of the village of Chu.

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